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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSO-00
INRE-00 TRSE-00 /059 W
----------292057Z 113364 /62
O 292024Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0059
USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 LONDON 01675

PLEASE PASS VICE PRESIDENT'S PARTY FOR EISELE

E. O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: OVIP (MONDALE, WALTER F.)
SUBJECT: POLITICAL STORM BREWING ABOUT DAILY MAIL STORY

1. WE RECEIVED A TELEPHONE CALL THIS AFTERNOON FROM TOM MCCAFFREY, PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN'S PRESS SECRETARY, SAYING THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WAS "VERY ANGRY," THAT A POLITICAL STORM WAS BREWING BETWEEN THE PARTIES AND WITHIN THE LABOR PARTY, AND THAT THEY EXPECTED PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS AS A RESULT OF A STORY APPEARING TODAY ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE LONDON DAILY MAIL (INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE, CIRCULATION 1,730,757) UNDER THE BY-LINE OF JOSEPH MULLINS, ONE OF THEIR GENERAL REPORTERS. THE STORY CONCERNS THE ALLEGED VERY HIGH LEVEL OF FOOD AND DRINK SERVED AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S DINNER FOR THE VICE PRESIDENT AND CONTAINS QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO THE VICE PRESIDENT'S PRESS SECRETARY, ALBERT EISELE. THE FULL TEXT OF THE STORY IS SET FORTH BELOW.

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2. MCCAFFREY ASKED IF WE COULD THROW ANY LIGHT ON THE STORY WHICH WE WERE NOT ABLE TO DO AND THEN REQUESTED (#) S PARTY ASKING FOR
ANY INFORMATION WHICH COULD BE PROVIDED ABOUT THE STORY AND ANY VIEWS ABOUT WHAT WE ALL SHOULD DO ABOUT IT.

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3. HE SAID THAT THEY WERE RECEIVING MANY PRESSURES TO MAKE STATEMENTS ABOUT THE STORY BUT WERE TRYING TO RESIST THESE PRESSURES SINCE HE FELT THAT MAKING STATEMENTS WOULD SERVE ONLY TO SPREAD THE STORY FURTHER. HE SAID THAT IN RESPONSE TO PRESS AND OTHER QUERIES THEY WERE SAYING ONLY THAT THE DINNER WAS A WORKING DINNER AND THAT THE QUALITY OF THE FOOD AND DRINK SERVED WAS NORMAL FOR A DINNER OF THIS KIND INVOLVING THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THEIR MOST IMPORTANT ALLY.

4. THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED A NUMBER OF PRESS QUERIES ABOUT THE STORY. WE HAVE RESPONDED TO SUCH QUERIES ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES. WE HAVE POINTED OUT THAT WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY SUCH BRIEFING BEING GIVEN BY MR. EISEL WHILE HE WAS IN LONDON. WE ALSO NOTED THAT IN FILLING US IN ON THE DINNER FOR USE IN RESPONDING TO PRESS QUERIES THAT MR. EISELE HAD SAID ONLY THAT THE DINNER WAS A VERY CONVIVIAL OCCASION WHICH HAD SERVED TO FURTHER CEMENT ANGLO-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP. AFTER RECEIVING THE FIRST QUERIES ABOUT THIS STORY THIS AFTERNOON, WE TRIED TO REACH MR. EISELE BEFORE THE VICE PRESIDENT'S PARTY LEFT PARIS BUT DID NOT SUCCEED.

5. ANY GUIDANCE YOU CAN PROVIDE US TO USE IN RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION FROM THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AND ALSO IN RESPONSE TO FURTHER PRESS QUERIES WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED. A CATEGORICAL DENIAL BY MR.
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EISELE OF REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IF THIS IS POSSIBLE UNDER THE ACTUAL CIRCUM-STANCES, SUPPORTED BY A PERSONAL NOTE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

6. COMMENT: THIS COULD CLEARLY BLOW UP TO BE AN EMBARRASSING SITUATION FOR THE PM, GIVEN BRITAIN'S CURRENT ECONOMIC STATE AND THE MANY WHO WILL BE TEMPTED TO SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY FOR POLITICAL ADVANTAGE. END COMMENT.

7. THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF THE DAILY MAIL STORY. BEGIN TEXT HEADLINE JIM'S LAVISH PARTY ASTONISHES THE AMERICANS END TEXT HEADLINE. BEGIN TEXT STORY. IT WASN'T THE PRIME MINISTER'S SINGING THAT SURPRISED THE NEW AMERICAN VICE PRESIDENT SO MUCH AS THE SUMPTUOUS DINNER HE LAID ON FOR HIM.

"THE BRITISH PUBLIC WOULD PROBABLY RISE UP IN ARMS IF THEY KNEW ABOUT IT." MR. WALTER MONDALE'S

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NOTE BY OC/T: (#) OMISSION, CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 LONDON 01675

PRESS SECRETARY ALBERT EISELE SAID YESTERDAY-- THE MORNING AFTER THE NIGHT BEFORE.

THE AMERICANS WERE CLEARLY BEMUSED THAT MR. CALLAGHAN AND HIS MINISTERS, WHO HAVE REPEATEDLY WARNED ABOUT HARD TIMES AHEAD, SHOULD LAY ON SUCH HIGH JINKS.

DOWNING STREET DESCRIBED THE FUNCTION AS A WORKING DINNER, BUT IT WAS REALLY A LIGHT-HEARTED AFFAIR OF FEASTINQ AND ENTERTAINMENT WITH THE PREMIER HIMSELF GIVING THE CUE FOR A SING-SONG ROUND THE TABLE.

MR. EISELE, BRIEFING U. S. CORRESPONDENTS, SAID "IT WAS A WARM EXPRESSION OF ANGLO-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP."

THE GUESTS DRANK "SOME VERY GOOD WINE."

HE LISTED--

MOUTON ROTHSCHILD CLARET--PRICED AT"STERLING EIGHT POUNDS A BOTTLE AT THE VERY MINIMUM" BY ONE EXPERT, MR. TERENCE TOFIELD, WHO'S WITH A LEADINQ LONDON FIRM OF WINE MERCHANTS.

GRAHAM'S PORT FROM "THE PRIVATE STOCK LAID DOWN BY SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL--VERY RARE AND VERY VALUABLE"
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SAID MR. TOFIELD.

A 1712 COGNAC "AT LEAST STERLING 28 POUNDS A BOTTLE, MORE LIKELY OVER 100, AND QUITE POSSIBLY PRICELESS."

IF THE TAXPAYERS KNEW, SAID MR. EISELE, "THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE OVERTHROWN."

HE DIDN'T SAY SO, BUT NO AMERICAN PRESIDENT WOULD DARE PRESENT QUITE SUCH A LAVISH SPREAD.

HOSPITALITY ON THIS SCALE IS VIRTUALLY UNKNOWN IN AMERICA BECAUSE OF THE FIERCE CRITICISM IT WOULD AROUSE AMONG VOTERS. THE PRESS ARE ALWAYS PRESENT AT FUNCTIONS OF THIS KIND OR INFORMED IN DETAIL ABOUT THEM.

NOT ONLY AMERICAN POLITICIANS BUT BUSINESSMEN, TOO, ARE FREQUENTLY ASTONISHED AT THE ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDED FOR THEM WHEN THEY COME TO LONDON.

BROUGHT UP IN A DIFFERENT TRADITION, THEY REGARD MONEY SPENT IN THIS WAY IN A COUNTRY DEEPLY IN DEBT AS ALMOST OFFENSIVE.

THE "MONDALE SPREAD" WOULD HAVE COME OUT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S HOSPITALITY FUND WHICH SUPPLIES MONEY FOR MINISTERS TO ENTERTAIN FOREIGN VIPS.

MR. CALLAGHAN WOULD HAVE INDICATED THE LEVEL OF HOSPITALITY HE REGARDED AS APPROPRIATE.

DOWNING STREET OFFICIALS DESCRIBED THE DINNER AS A "MARVELLOUSLY FRIENDLY OCCASION WHICH MUST AUGUR WELL FOR THE FUTURE RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

ASKED FOR MORE DETAILS, A SPOKESMAN GAVE THE MENU AS: CONSOMME, FOLLOWED BY SOLE, A COURSE OF DUCK AND APRICOTS, AND THEN PROFITEROLES IN CHOCHOLATE SAUCE.

THE SPOKESMAN DID NOT MENTION DRINKS AND WHEN THIS WAS POINTED OUT HE SAID: "I'VE NOT SEEN THE WINE LIST. IF YOU'RE SUGGESTING IT WAS A DRUNKEN PARTY THEN IT'S NOT ON. THE PM IS A NON-DRINKER."

IT WAS OVER PORT AND COGNAC AND BENEATH THE CHANDELIER THAT MR. CALLAGHAN PUSHED BACK HIS CHAIR

FROM THE MASSIVE TABLE IN THE STATE DINING ROOM AT NO.10 AND LED HIS GUESTS INTO A SINGSONG. HE SANG JERUSALEM IN A RICH BARITONE.

HIS FOREIGN SECRETARY, MR. ANTHONY CROSLAND, ASTONISHED EVERYBODY BY SINGING LAND OF MY FATHERS IN WELSH.

NOT TO BE OUTDONE, VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 LONDON 01675

RECALLED A SONG HE LEARNED WHILE STUDYING IN LONDON IN THE FORTIES AND GAVE A TUNEFUL RENDITION OF I BELONG TO GLASGOW. AN AMERICAN AIDE LATER DESCRIBED IT AS A TRADITIONAL WELSH DITTY.

MR. DENNIS HEALEY, THE CHANCELLOR, CROWNED THE EVENING, AS YOU WOULD EXPECT FROM A YORKSHIREMAN WITH ILKLEY MOOR BAHT 'AT.

AFTER ALL THE WINING AND DINING, MR. MONDALE WOKE UP YESTERDAY STILL IN GOOD HUMOUR.

HE STROLLED FROM HIS HOTEL, CLARIDGE'S TO LIBERTY'S STORE IN REGENT STREET.

WOULD HE BUY SOMETHING FOR HIS WIFE? "YEA, A NECKTIE. NO REALLY, I'M GOING TO GET HER SOMETHING REALLY EXPENSIVE--AT LEAST THREE OR FOUR DOLLARS."

HE TRIED ON A WOOLLEN SCARF BUT PUT IT BACK, JOKING: "THERE GOES THE TEXTILE WORKERS' VOTE." BUT HE DID BUY TWO SILK TIES FOR STERLING TWELVE POUNDS FIFTY PENCE AND A SILK SQUARE FOR STERLING SIX POUNDS SEVENTY-FIVE PENCE.

THEN, WITH HIS COLLAR TURNED UP AGAINST THE
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DRIZZLE, HE WALKED BACK TOWARDS HIS HOTEL TO PACK FOR THE NEXT STAGE OF HIS WORLD TOUR SPREADING PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER'S "HANDS OF FRIENDSHIP."

HE WAS WELL ON HIS WAY TO PARIS WHEN THE FIRST PROTEST WAS MADE ABOUT THE NO. 10 JUNKET.

MR. DENIS SKINNER, LABOUR MP FOR BOLSOVER, DERBYSHIRE, DECLARED: "I DON'T SEE WHY WAGE EARNERS WHO TIGHTEN THEIR BELTS SHOULD BE FACED WITH A GOVERNMENT THAT SPENDS MONEY IN THIS MANNER."
END OF TEXT.

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